

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02

OPIC-03 SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 OES-06

INT-05 FEA-01 AGR-05 AGRE-00 STR-04 MCT-01 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15 /125 W

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R 281402Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2575

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY NASSAU

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 4162

FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, EAID, JM, CA, TD, IMF

SUBJECT: JLP INFORMATION ON MANLEY'S ELECTION PLANS AND ECONOMIC
NEEDS

1. SENATOR RONALD IRVINE, WHO HANDLES SPECIAL TASKS FOR
JAMAICA LABOR PARTY (JLP) LEADER SEAGA, CALLED ON ME AT
0730 TODAY (SEPTEMBER 27) TO PASS THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION
AT SEAGA'S REQUEST.

2. ELECTION SCHEDULE. SEAGA NOW EXPECTS PRIME MINISTER
MANLEY TO CALL THE FORTHCOMING PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION FOR
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DECEMBER 21.

3. FINANCIAL AID. JAMAICA IS SEEKING OR WILL SEEK THE FOLLOWING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

A. IMF. A LOAN OF \$100.0 MILLION. IF GRANTED, AN EXPECTED REQUIREMENT WILL BE A DEVALUATION OF THE JAMAICAN DOLLAR OF UP TO 40 PERCENT.

B. PRC. FINANCE AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER COORE HAS USED HIS VISIT TO CHINA (KINGSTON 4007) TO SEEK A LOAN OF \$30.0 MILLION.

C. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. ATTORNEY PATRICK ROUSSEAU, WHO IS ALSO CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL BAUXITE COMMISSION, HAS BEEN DESPATCHED TO TRINIDAD IN HOPES OF NEGOTIATING A ONE-YEAR CREDIT FOR PETROLEUM SUPPLIES.

D. CANADA. PM MANLEY, OFF TO CANADA AT THE END OF OCTOBER (KINGSTON 4008), WILL BE SEEKING A FURTHER CREDIT TO COVER CANADIAN WHEAT IMPORTS.

4. COMMENT: IF THESE REPORTS ARE ACCURATE AND THE ELECTIONS ARE TO BE HELD JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS, RATHER THAN IN FEBRUARY AS EARLIER EXPECTED, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE PEOPLE'S NATIONAL PARTY (PNP) HAS CONCLUDED THAT ECONOMIC CONDITIONS -- AND THE GOVERNMENT'S BUDGETARY POSITION -- ARE DETERIORATING FASTER THAN PREVIOUSLY SUPPOSED. DECEMBER 21 WOULD BE A RELATIVELY GOOD TIME, EXPECIALLY IF THE PNP CAN POINT WITH PRIDE TO NEW CREDITS, NEW AGREEMENTS WITH THE BAUXITE COMPANIES, AND A VICTORY AGAINST CRIME AND VIOLENCE. CHRISTMAS BONUSES WILL HAVE BEEN PAID OR ALMOST DUE, AND THE IMPACT SCHEME (JAMAICA'S VARIATION OF THE WPA) WILL PROBABLY STILL BE IN OPERATION. GIVEN THE USUAL EUPHORIA OF CHRISTMAS -- AND THE FACT THAT THE BILLS WOULD YET HAVE TO BE PRESENTED -- THE CHOICE OF DECEMBER 21 WOULD SEEM FELICITOUS. PRE-ELECTION VIOLENCE MIGHT FRIGHTEN TOURISTS, BUT THE PNP SEEMS TO HAVE WRITTEN OFF THE TOURIST BUSINESS THIS YEAR ANYWAY, AND THE ELECTIONS WOULD BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE IMPORTANT
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MONTHS OF THE 1976 TOURIST SEASON ARE REACHED.

5. LENDING FURTHER CREDENCE TO SEAGA'S REPORT ON A DECEMBER ELECTION, EMBOFFS IN RECENT DAYS HAVE PICKED UP SIMILAR STORIES (OR RUMORS) FROM A VARIETY OF OTHER SOURCES, AS HAS THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION. ONE JDF OFFICER EVEN NAMED THE SAME DATE IN A CONVERSATION WITH OUR DATT.

6. THE SCENARIO PRESENTED FITS IN THE PNP PREDILECTION

FOR COMBINING BRINKSMAN ECONOMIC PLANNING AND RAZZLE-DAZZLE
"DEUS-EX-MACHINA" POLITICS, BUT IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE
TIME-FRAME IS SHORT AND THE PITCHER WOULD BE RETURNING
TO SEVERAL HITHERTO NOT SIGNIFICANTLY PRODUCTIVE
WELLS (EXCEPT FOR TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO) - PERHAPS
TOO OFTEN.
GERARD

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NNN

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